

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 17 and 40 without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Please amend Claims 1, 23, 24, 55 and 56 as shown below. The claims, as pending in the subject application, read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of annotating an image, said method comprising the steps of:

providing extracting a list of plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated;

displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image ~~is displayed after each of the metadata labels has been associated with at least one of the plurality of icons;~~

detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

determining a location of a subject rendered within the image based on a selection of the subject, the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon being related to said selected subject;

linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of the location of the selected subject within the image; and storing the linked one or more metadata labels and the description as an annotation of the image.

2. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the selection of said subject is detected by dragging the selected icon to the image, and dropping the dragged icon on the subject of the image.

3. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the bounded region is formed based on an analysis of pixels of the image.

4. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein the analysis includes an analysis of the colour information of the pixels of the image.

5. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the bounded region is of a predetermined size.

6. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of forming a bounded region within the image about the location at which the subject is rendered in said image, the bounded region being configured to substantially surround the subject.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 2, wherein a bounded region under the dragged icon is emphasized.

9. and 10. (Cancelled)

11. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, further comprising a step of extracting a part of the image based on the bounded region.

12. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 11, further comprising a step of displaying the extracted part of the image.

13. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein a size of the bounded region is determined automatically.

14. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein a size of the bounded region is changeable by a user.

15. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the one or more metadata labels are stored as the annotation of the subject, and are displayed upon selecting the subject in the image.

16. to 17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein said storing step includes storing the one or more metadata labels as the annotation of the subject of the image by using a tag indicating an association with the image.

19. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 18, wherein the one or more metadata labels associated with the subject of the image are stored in an XML file.

20. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of e-mailing at least the image to at least one e-mail address based on the one or more metadata labels associated with the image.

21. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, further comprising a step of replacing a default icon by the selected icon based on the subject of the image.

22. (Cancelled)

23. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium storing a computer program, wherein said computer program comprises software code portions for performing a method of annotating an image, said program comprising:

code for providing extracting a list of plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

code for associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

code for displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated;

code for displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image is displayed after each of the metadata labels has been associated with at least one of the plurality of icons;

code for detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

code for determining a location of a subject rendered within the image based on a selection of the subject, the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon being related to said selected subject;

code for linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of the location of the subject within the image; and

code for storing the linked one or more metadata labels and the description as an annotation of the image.

24. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for annotating an image, said apparatus comprising:

metadata label providing extracting means for providing extracting a list of plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

association means for associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

display means for displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated, and for displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image is displayed after each of the metadata labels has been associated with at least one of the plurality of icons;

selection detecting means for detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

location determining means for determining a location of a subject rendered within the image based on a selection of the subject, the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon being related to said selected subject;

linking means for linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of the location of the selected subject within the image; and

storage means for storing the linked one or more metadata and the description as an annotation of the image.

25. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the selection of said subject is detected by dragging the selected icon to the image, and dropping the dragged icon on the subject of the image.

26. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the bounded region is formed based on an analysis of pixels of the image.

27. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the analysis includes an analysis of the colour information of the pixels of the image.

28. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the bounded region is of a predetermined size.

29. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising means for forming a bounded region within the image about the locations at which the subject is rendered in the image, the bounded region being configured to substantially surround the subject.

30. (Cancelled)

31. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 25, wherein a bounded region under the dragged icon is emphasized.

32. and 33. (Cancelled)

34. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, further comprising means for extracting a part of the image based on the bounded region.

35. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 34, wherein said display means further displays the extracted part of the image.

36. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein a size of the bounded region is determined automatically.

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein a size of the bounded region is changeable by a user.

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the one or more metadata labels are stored as the annotation of the subject, and are displayed upon selecting the subject in the image.

39. and 40. (Cancelled)

41. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein said storage means stores the one or more metadata labels as the annotation of the subject of the image by using a tag indicating an association with the image.

42. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 41, wherein the one or more metadata labels associated with the subject of the image are stored in an XML file.

43. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising means for e-mailing at least the image to at least one e-mail address based on the one or more metadata labels associated with the image.

44. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, further comprising means for replacing a default icon by the selected icon based on the subject of the image.

45. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the description includes a location of the bounded region within the image.

46. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the description includes a size of the bounded region.

47. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 6, wherein the bounded region is formed at a location at which the selected icon is dropped on the image.

48. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 3, wherein a size of the bounded region is determined based on the analysis.

49. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein only the linked one or more metadata labels and the description are stored as an annotation of the subject of the image.

50. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the description of the bounded region includes a location of the bounded region within the image.

51. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the description of the bounded region includes a size of the bounded region.

52. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 29, wherein the bounded region is formed at a location at which the icon is dropped on the image.

53. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 26, wherein a size of the bounded region is determined based on the analysis.

54. (Previously Presented) The apparatus according to claim 24, wherein only the linked one or more metadata labels and the description are stored as an annotation of the subject of the image.

55. (Currently Amended) A method of annotating an image, said method comprising the steps of:

providing extracting a list of plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

associating each of the metadata labels in the list with at least one of a plurality of icons;

displaying the plurality of icons, each of the icons being labelled with one or more of the metadata labels with which the icon was associated;

displaying the image adjacent to the displayed plurality of labelled icons, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image ~~is displayed after each of the metadata labels has been associated with at least one of the plurality of icons;~~

detecting selection of at least one of the displayed plurality of labelled icons;

determining a location of a subject rendered within the image based on a selection of the subject, the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon being related to said selected subject;

forming a bounded region within the image about the location at which the subject is rendered in said image, said bounded region being configured to substantially surround the subject;

linking the one or more metadata labels associated with the selected icon with a description of said bounded region; and

storing the linked one or more metadata labels and the description as an annotation of the image.

56. (Currently Amended) A method of annotating an image, said method comprising the steps of:

providing extracting a list of plurality of metadata labels from an existing database of metadata labels to form a list of metadata labels;

displaying a representation of each of the metadata labels in the list;

displaying the image adjacent to the displayed representations of metadata labels, wherein said metadata labels are generated prior to having knowledge of the content of the image is displayed after each of the metadata labels has been associated with at least one of the plurality of icons;

detecting selection of at least one of the displayed representations of metadata labels;

determining a location of a subject rendered within the image upon the subject being selected, the metadata label associated with the selected representation being related to said selected subject;

linking the metadata label associated with the selected representation with a description of the location of the selected subject within the image; and

storing the linked metadata label and the description as an annotation of the image.